DCHA/PPM LEARNING AND TRAINING SUPPORT QUARTERLY REPORT

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DCHA/PPM Learning and Training Support Task Order (TO)

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Overview

MSI is the prime contractor on the DCHA/PPM Learning and Training Support Task Order (TO). Under this TO, MSI supports USAID's DCHA Bureau in their learning and training activities as well as analysis through training curriculum design and delivery, assessing learning through evaluation, and knowledge management through dissemination of electronic information and e-learning. In the area of knowledge management and e-learning, MSI is supported by its subcontractor, CAMRIS. The Second quarter of the second year of this three-year contract marked a significant period under this task order. The fifth iteration of the DCHA Essentials Course was successfully completed and recommendations for the future design and development of DCHA Essentials Courses were submitted. Additionally, the newly revamped Crises, Stabilization and Governance Course was held in Washington, DC along with two iterations, one in Washington, DC and one in Bangkok, Thailand, of the Advanced Conflict Assessment Course.

The DCHA Professional Development and Learning portal (DCHA PD&L) underwent major advances in the areas of content development, design, structure and accessibility. In addition, the preliminary planning phase for the regional workshop is currently underway. In order to facilitate the efficient implementation of these projects, weekly planning meetings were held with the COTR and the quarterly accruals report was submitted to the COTR for review and final approval. The second year of the task order is slated to include four domestic iterations of the DCHA Essentials training course, including the DCHA introductory course; three Conflict Stabilization and Governance Workshops; two Washington DC and one field offering of the Advanced Conflict Assessment course, four Washington DC offerings and two field offerings of the Conflict 102 course courses, one Africa Regional Conference and a DCHA Professional Development & Learning Portal.

This quarterly report covers the Second Quarter, FY2012 (January 1, 2012 through March 31, 2012).

Highlights

- Successfully conducted the DCHA Essentials' Fall 2011Course in Washington, DC from February 22 – April 5, 2012 which included the modified "DCHA 101", a three day course providing DLIs and non-DLI DCHA staff with an orientation and introduction to the DCHA Bureau and each of the individual DCHA Offices;
- Compiled extensive participant evaluations and submitted recommendations based on feedback gathered from evaluations on course design and curriculum to be implemented in future iterations of the course;
- Successfully conducted the Crises, Stabilization and Governance course on January 23-27;
- Compiled and analyzed CSG course participant feedback and submitted recommendations for future course design and implementation;
- Effectively organized and hosted two iterations of the Advanced Conflict Assessment Course, one in Washington, DC (Jan 10 – 12) and one in Bangkok, Thailand (February 8-10);
- Compiled and analyzed participant feedback and submitted recommendations for ACA course curriculum as well as design and implementation;
- Continued the planning phase for the DCHA Regional Workshop to take place in Africa;

- Switched the operating platform of the DCHA Training and Learning Portal to a Ning based platform in order to make the site easier to navigate for users.

Activities

The second quarter of the second year of this three year contract was marked by several noteworthy activities. Weekly planning meetings were held with the COTR to provide regular updates and make decisions on moving forward. Additionally, the major activities undertaken this quarter included the following:

DCHA Essentials Course: During this quarter, the DCHA Essentials Spring 2012 Course was held in Washington, DC from Feb 22 – April 5, 2012. The course was offered to one DLI (Backstop 76 Crises, Stabilization and Governance) participant and 14 DCHA staff participants from various DCHA offices as well as institutional contractors. This was the second iteration of the DCHA Essentials course that was targeted at both DLIs and full-time non-DLI DCHA staff. The spring course included the modified DCHA 101, a three day course providing participants with an orientation and introduction to the DCHA Bureau and each individual DCHA Office. This three day orientation was then followed by technical training offered by each of the DCHA offices. Participant evaluations were compiled for both the DCHA 101course and the technical training sessions and recommendations on future design and curriculum were be submitted to the COTR.

DCHA Regional Workshop: During this quarter, the preliminary planning phase was continued. As part of this phase an overall staff needs assessment is currently being developed in coordination with personnel from the Africa Bureau. This staff needs assessment is meant to effectively gauge the topics and issues that are most pertinent to DLIs currently working in Africa in order to develop relevant workshop curriculum and activities. Additionally, March 2013 was selected as a tentative date for the conference. Workshop logistics along with prospective locations will continue to be discussed with the COTR and internally with USAID colleagues.

Crises, Stabilization and Governance Course: During this quarter, the Crises, Stabilization and Governance (CSG) course was held in Washington, DC on January 23 - 27. This iteration was the first conducted following the 2011 pilot course held in Bangkok, Thailand and included a modified curriculum and design. The CSG course is intended to improve the participant's ability to understand the relief to development continuum and the intersection with effective and legitimate governance; recognize the differences in planning, programming and monitoring and evaluation in fragile states versus resilient states; and obtain broader insight into working with multiple stakeholders (i.e. host country, the inter-agency, and other international actors).The course was attended by 13 participants from the various DCHA Offices as well as field missions. Participant evaluations were compiled and recommendations for modifications for future courses were submitted to the COTR.

Advanced Conflict Assessment Course: During this quarter, two iterations of the Advanced Conflict Assessment course, which included one post-pilot course in Washington, DC (January 10–12) as well as one field offering in Bangkok, Thailand (Feb 8-10) were conducted. Participants for both courses included USAID staff (Washington, DC and field) and external consultants experienced in conducting conflict assessments. The Washington DC iteration was attended by 13 participants while the Bangkok, Thailand iteration was attended by 8 participants from various field missions. The course was intended to ensure that participants had a commonly understood (and consistently applied) framework for USAID conflict assessments; that USAID staff were familiarized with the process of assessment and considerations for planning; improved skills in using the USAID Conflict Assessment Framework to guide data collection and analysis; and provide tools for synthesizing information into findings and for linking findings to concrete recommendations for USAID programmatic response.

Participant evaluations were compiled and recommendations for curriculum design modifications were submitted to the COTR.

DCHA Platform: During this quarter, the DCHA Training and Learning Portal's platform and navigational structure were significantly modified. After considering various options, the decision was made to utilize Ning's (http://ning.com) platform to host the DCHA Learning Portal. Using the new platform, the content of the previous Moodle-powered DCHA Learning Portal (both web-page text and document attachments) was completely transferred over to the new site. By using Ning, the same content is available to the user but presenting it in an easier to grasp, more web-conventional manner. The process of creating and editing content as well as layout has also been streamlined. Approved admin-level users can easily access the site and use the simplified interface to add or alter content and layout. The newly modified Portal will greatly enhance and simply the user's experience.

DCHA PD&L Portal Homepage Current Appearance

DCHA PD&L New Navigational Structure
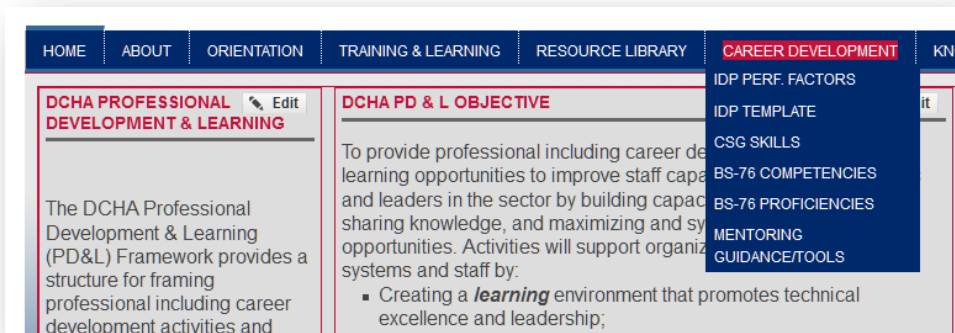
DCHA PD&L New Login Page
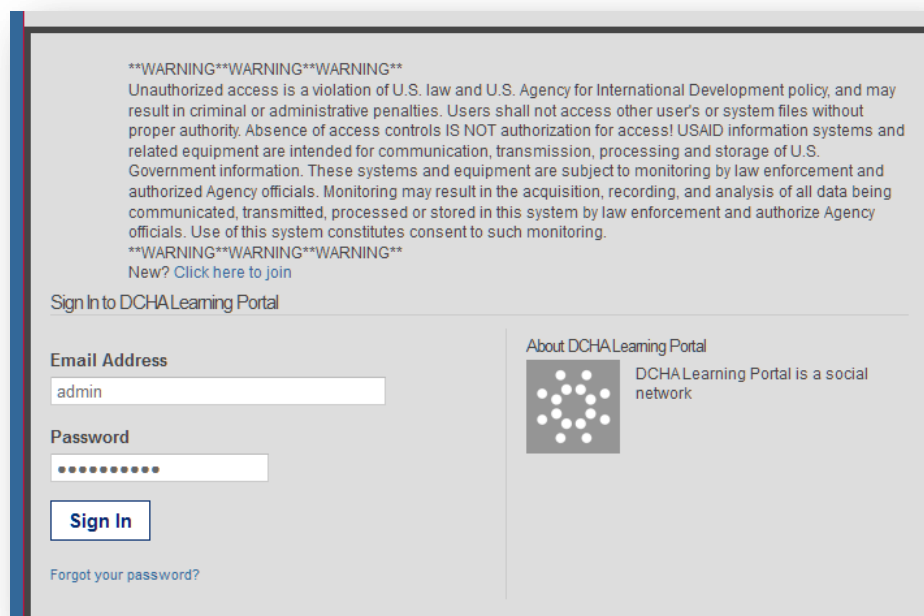
Lessons Learned

The lessons learned over the course of this quarter were that there is continual interest for the DCHA Essentials course by non-DLI staff within the DCHA Bureau. Given the growing number of DHCA staff are increasing and the fact that future DLI classes are being reduced by the Agency, future DCHA Essentials courses will continually be expanded to accommodate interested DCHA staff. A more flexible scheduling of the course will also be presented in order to allow participants to attend the various Essentials' courses at times that better fit participant schedules. As such, it is vital to ensure coordination and cooperation between the various DCHA office presenters. Additionally, the course should have a greater emphasis on the DCHA Bureau's four primary objectives: crisis prevention, response, recovery, and transition. Meetings and additional coordination will be planned with DCHA

office trainers to ensure smooth planning for future iterations of the course. Also, in order to continually provide both effective logistical support and technical recommendations for the Conflict 102 as well as the Advanced Conflict Assessment courses, continued interface and cooperation with personnel from the office of CMM is necessary.

The DCHA Professional Development and Learning Portal has undergone a significant change and is currently operating on a new platform. As such, it has reached a stage where it should be actively used by DCHA staff. Therefore, adequate promotion and accessibility of the site as well as the ability of the user to efficiently navigate the content are paramount its success. Portal administrators and DCHA trainers should continue to take an active part in improving the functionality and adding to the content as well as actively responding to user input and feedback. The ability to enhance the user's experience by responding to user feedback will greatly affect the success of the site.

Plans for Next Quarter

- Host the sixth iteration of the DCHA Essentials and DCHA 101 course on June 6-8 in Washington, DC;
- Host a field offering of the modified Crises, Stabilization and Governance course on April 16 - 20 in Nairobi, Kenya;
- Host a Conflict 102 course on June 18-19 in Washington, DC;
- Conduct a Training of Trainers for the facilitators of the Conflict 102 course;
- Coordinate with DCHA training officers to develop consistent and cohesive training materials across all offices for the DCHA Essentials course;
- Continued collaboration with personnel from the Africa Bureau to develop a needs assessment for DLI field staff in order to effectively develop goals, priorities and material for the DCHA Regional Workshop;
- Continue development of material for DCHA Regional Workshop;
- Plan and conduct training session(s) for Trainers and Managers so that they develop confidence in the use of the Portal's Content Management System in order to take active part in making the portal interactive;
- Continue to add new content to the Portal site as well as make necessary changes in order to ensure greatest ease and efficiency for user.